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IAC-M-4

9 November 1950

INTELLIGENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting held in Director's
Conference Room, Administration Building
Central Intelligence Agency, on 9 November 1950

Director of Central Intelligence
Lieutenant General Walter Bedell Smith
Presiding

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. W. Park Armstrong, Jr., Special Assistant, Intelligence
Department of State
Major General A. R. Bolling, Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2,
Department of the Army
Rear Admiral Felix L. Johnson, Director of Naval
Intelligence
Major General Charles P. Cabell, Director of Intelligence,
Headquarters, United States Air Force
Dr. Walter F. Colby, Director of Intelligence, Atomic
Energy Commission
Captain R. G. McCool, USN, acting for Deputy Director for
Intelligence, The Joint Staff
Mr. Victor P. Keay, acting for Assistant to the Director,
Federal Bureau of Investigation

ALSO PRESENT

Mr. William H. Jackson, Central Intelligence Agency
Mr. Ludwell L. Montague, Central Intelligence Agency
Colonel Louis W. Proper, Central Intelligence Agency
Mr. Allan Evans, Department of State
Colonel Hamilton H. Howze, Department of the Army
Colonel Henry C. Ahalt, Department of the Army
Captain John M. Ocker, USN, Department of the Navy
Captain Ray Malpass, USN, Department of the Navy
Colonel Edward H. Porter, Department of the Air Force
Lieut. Colonel J. C. Marchant, Department of the Air Force

Acting Secretary
Mr. James Q. Reber
Central Intelligence Agency

APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE:
26-Aug-2008

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*Subj: IAC-M-4
Title: Korea
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Communist Reaction to UN Military Actions in Korea

1. Action: Agreed that the Director should in his discussion at the NSC this afternoon be guided by the following statement in respect to anticipated questions regarding USSR and Chinese Communist probable reaction to different courses of UN action in Korea:

To date there is insufficient evidence to indicate that the USSR intends to commit Soviet forces overtly in Korea. However, the commitment of Chinese Communist forces, with Soviet material aid, indicates that the USSR considers the Korean situation of sufficient importance to warrant the risk of general war.

The probability is that the Soviet Union considers that the U. S. will not launch a general war over Chinese Communist intervention in North Korea and the reaction thereto, therefore the principal risk of general war is through the exercise of Soviet initiative which they continue to hold. The probability is that they have not yet made a decision directly to launch a general war over the Korean-Chinese situation. There is a good chance that they will not in the immediate future take such a decision. At what point they will take a decision to launch a general war is not now determinable by intelligence.

It was also believed that bombing across the Yalu will not substantially increase the risk of general war but will increase the risk of Chinese intervention on a large scale.

2. Discussion: Considerations which were raised in respect to the foregoing conclusion are as follows:

a. There is no new intelligence which suggests altering our earlier conclusion that a more desirable time, from the Soviet point of view, to risk global war would be a couple of years hence.

b. Local incidents such as the Korean one will not likely affect the basic timing and decision. It was recognized in this regard that the Soviet retains great flexibility

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in the current situation, being in a position to move toward peace by calling off the Chinese or to move toward war by strengthening Chinese resistance or by taking the basic decision to go to war.

c. Concern was expressed that the USSR has in the past misjudged the reaction of its enemy in pressing Soviet claims and that this is always possible again.

d. It is still doubted that the Chinese are completely the tool of the Soviet. It is believed that the disadvantages to the Chinese of general hostilities with the United Nations are so great as to cause Mao to pause, it being noted that a demolition of key Chinese cities would reduce China to a vassal of the Soviet, a provisioner of manpower and probably a battlefield.

e. It appears that the Chinese have given up in their efforts to achieve a seat in the UN. This view is strengthened by the invasion of Tibet. In this connection the question was weighed inconclusively of whether the Chinese still hoped to retain the friendship and collaboration of the Indians, though the uncertain position of Nehru in his Cabinet was noted as portending the trend of Indian thinking.

f. Chinese Communist objectives are probably to reduce the effects of the North Korean failure and to retain a hold in Korea for the development of a buffer, guerrilla warfare or war itself if the USSR desires. Behind this is probably also a Soviet inspiration to draw us into China to the extent of causing us to fail in our commitments to rearm Europe.

g. Evaluation of Russian intentions on the basis of intelligence is not possible at this time, complicating factors with regard to which lie in the analysis of Russian and Chinese attitudes toward the expenditure of masses of human life and the complete unconcern for the amount of time necessary to reach their long-range objectives. Intelligence reports regarding deployment of USSR shipping were submitted as possible evidence that the Russians had made a decision against global war at this time.

h. It was estimated that for the UN forces to hold a line at the narrowest part of the Peninsula or the 38th

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Parallel (more difficult in the latter case) would be hazardous in terms of the psychological effects around the world and particularly so unless some decision as to where we go from there has been made.

i. On the thesis that General MacArthur believes he can reach the Yalu and on the assumption that that cannot be done without the bombing of the Manchurian side of that River throughout the communications zone, which might extend from 50 to 500 miles, the following reactions were anticipated:

(1) The Chinese would have to react vigorously and extensively to save face.

(2) Unless it was done with prior ultimatum there would be danger of defection of some of our supporters in UN circles. Rated with a threatened bombing of the Manchurian side of the Yalu, in terms of the effect on the Chinese, were measures such as threat of blockade of the entire Chinese coast or bombing of major Chinese cities.

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